

nations with 11 Western European countries and the European Union, some of our country's most critical partners.

From 2005 to 2007, Ambassador Noyes was Director of Multilateral and Global Affairs in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, where she ran international negotiations on human rights—both at the United Nations in New York and in Geneva.

In that capacity, she also held consultations with the European Union, with the African Union, with other partners. And she was a member of high-level delegations that presented periodic reports to the United Nations on U.S. compliance with major international human rights treaties.

She has been recognized as a strong manager. She has overseen large teams. She has administered huge budgets.

In addition to all of this, she is the daughter of Cuban refugees who directly benefited from the work of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, so she has a personal connection to the importance of the Bureau's work.

When you think about that list of qualifications, she is really the ideal person to lead PRM. What is the rush, some may ask. PRM hasn't had a confirmed Assistant Secretary since the days of the Obama administration.

Well, all the more reason that it should have one now. It shouldn't be a rudderless organization when addressing so many important issues for our Nation.

PRM has a major role in human rights and humanitarian efforts rights abroad as well as providing aid to refugees here at home.

PRM is responsible for directing more than \$3 billion in lifesaving humanitarian aid around the world to more than 84 million forcibly displaced people. Eighty percent of those are women and children. So if you care about the plight of women and children around the world, you want to have an experienced leader making sure those dollars are efficiently allocated to the best effect.

PRM leads the rebuilding of the U.S. refugee assistance program. PRM works with other governments to promote regional migration resolutions. PRM advances international population policies that save mothers and babies and prevent gender-based violence around the world.

PRM leads diplomatic efforts for international burden sharing to better reduce suffering and to be more effective in saving lives.

And PRM is a critical part of our national security infrastructure, vetting those who come into our country, ensuring they don't pose a risk to our safety and security.

The Bureau is doing all this, but they are doing it without a leader to make sure they do it in the most effective, professional, competent fashion.

The Bureau is doing critical work every day to address these challenges,

and those challenges are growing as more and more countries are disrupted by war and by famine and by corruption.

So this Bureau deserves to have someone leading those efforts who has the type of background that the Ambassador has. All of us who want to see these programs administered effectively have a stake in having competent leadership in place.

Thus, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nomination, Calendar No. 462, Julieta Valls Noyes, to be an Assistant Secretary of State; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). Is there objection?

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

Throughout his administration, President Biden has shown a shocking disregard for congressional authority and oversight.

Following his botched and deadly withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Biden administration has refused to take accountability or provide answers to Congress or the American people. The President repeatedly shifts blame and hides from the truth. His administration demands to have closed, so-called classified hearings, even though none of the material being discussed is classified information.

We still don't even know how many Americans are trapped in Afghanistan. We don't know how many Americans are trapped in Afghanistan. Biden abandoned them behind enemy lines.

It is wrong. It left many Americans with no faith in President Biden's ability to lead or appoint qualified individuals to serve in these important roles.

That is why I cannot and will not consent to allowing this nominee to move forward in an expedited manner. We should take a vote so every Senator can get on the record with their support or opposition to this nominee.

Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I would love for us to have a full, ordinary process here on the floor and to have all of us on both sides of the aisle support that process.

I come to the floor to ask for this unanimous consent because that process has been frustrated, and we now have been without a leader for this entire administration.

My colleague made a point about Afghanistan, and he said we need to know how many Americans are in Afghanistan. If you want better action on the

issue of Americans as refugees abroad or stranded abroad, then you want to have a responsible leader, an accountable leader, heading up the Bureau of Population, Migration, and Refugees.

So let's do our job here in this Chamber because when we fail to enable such a critical organization, responsible for billions of dollars around the world being provided to millions of people, responsible for the vetting of people coming into our country, when we fail to do our job to put somebody in charge, we are only wounding ourselves.

This is exactly the type of partisan paralysis and destruction that is damaging our Nation. We need to get this confirmation completed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

REMEMBERING ELIZABETH PERATROVICH

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have come to the floor this evening to speak in honor and recognition of a woman by the name of Elizabeth Peratrovich.

Elizabeth Peratrovich is recognized in my State of Alaska as a champion, a relentless champion, for civil rights for all Alaskans.

It is on this day, the 16th of February, that the State of Alaska observes Elizabeth Peratrovich Day. In communities across the State, in schools, cultural centers, you are going to be seeing activities to honor this really remarkable Alaska Native leader.

PBS has an award-winning show for children called "Molly of Denali." It is a great TV show, and they recently had an episode highlighting the story of Elizabeth Peratrovich.

It was just 2 years ago, now, that her image was placed on a dollar coin issued by the U.S. Mint. So that recognition has gone beyond the State of Alaska, clearly, to the national and the Federal level.

So as we are celebrating Elizabeth Peratrovich Day back home, I am going to share a little bit of her story with the Senate because it is a legacy of seeking and realizing a more inclusive society and certainly a more representative democracy.

Elizabeth was a Tlingit, a member of the Raven/Sockeye or Lukaax-Adi clan. She was actually born on Independence Day, born in Petersburg, AK, in 1911.

And it was just a year after that, 1912, a group of Native people from across the southeastern part of the State mobilized to form an organization called the Alaska Native Brotherhood, ANB. Then, 2 years later, they formed the Alaska Native Sisterhood. ANB, ANS these are considered the oldest indigenous civil rights organizations in the world, started right there in southeastern Alaska.

ANB and ANS sought to advance equal opportunities for education, for employment, for housing, and they fought to secure Native civil rights.

Elizabeth married Roy Peratrovich, and the two of them became very active in ANB and ANS activities in the 1940s.

In 1941, they had moved to Juneau, and they encountered a level of discrimination in that community against Alaska Native peoples that, as we look at the accounts of the time, paralleled the Jim Crow practices in the South, but it strengthened their resolve. It strengthened their commitment to fight back against the discrimination that they saw.

Through their work with ANB and ANS, Elizabeth and Roy began advocating for an antidiscrimination bill in the Territorial legislature. If you will recall, we didn't become a State until 1959. This is the early forties, and they are talking about an antidiscrimination bill in our legislature. They pointed out to all who would listen that Alaska Natives were paying taxes for a public school system that excluded their children. They weren't part of that school system. They pointed out that Alaska Native men were fighting in World War II, but then on their return, they were denied rights that other veterans enjoyed.

Those fundamental discriminations and many more were what drove their pursuit for equal rights not just for Alaska Natives but for all people in Alaska.

So they had gone to Juneau in 1941. That antidiscrimination bill didn't pass immediately. It was reintroduced in 1945. And there is a lot of discussion about the pivotal moment in time when eyes were opened and, really, minds were also opened in awareness.

This was the time of debate where this antidiscrimination bill had passed the house, had moved over to the senate, and there was a Territorial senator who denounced these efforts to desegregate, and he stood up on the senate floor, and he said:

Who are these people, barely out of savagery, who want to associate with us whites, with 5,000 years of recorded civilization behind us?

Pretty inflammatory if you are sitting there in those Senate chambers listening to that, certainly—certainly—to an Alaska Native person.

At the end of the debate, the public was offered a chance to express their views in front of the legislature. That is not something that you have happen in most legislatures. We don't have it in our legislature now, but in our Territorial legislature, the public was offered a chance to weigh in here.

And Elizabeth Peratrovich stood in the back of this senate gallery, and in her remarks, she said:

I would not have expected that I, who am "barely out of savagery," would have to remind the gentleman with 5,000 years of recorded civilization behind them of our Bill of Rights.

And when asked if she thought that the bill would eliminate discrimination, she replied:

Do your laws against larceny and even murder prevent those crimes? No law will eliminate crimes, but at least you as legislators can assert to the world that you recognize the evil of the present situation and

speak your intent to help us overcome discrimination.

Imagine this scene. You are part of this legislative body, and from the back of the gallery, a Native woman stands to speak to address this elected body.

Following her comments, there was a long period of silence, and then there was applause through the gallery and through the senate floor, including from some who had previously opposed the bill.

Alaska's Governor at the time, Ernest Gruening, went on to sign the antidiscrimination act, the Nation's first antidiscrimination act, signed into law on February 16, 1945. This was almost two decades before the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964.

So it is something that when we in Alaska think about the history of discrimination that we have had, that certainly Alaska Native people have endured—endured far too long—to have led the country in terms of putting into law the first antidiscrimination act in this country a couple decades before the Civil Rights Act advanced through this Congress.

During an Indian Affairs Committee hearing on Native voting access last October, the president of the Alaska Federation Natives, Julie Kitka, reminded us that these events are not very old, and sometimes we think of Elizabeth Peratrovich as part of our history, but she, Elizabeth, and her husband Roy, and the impact that they had on Alaska and the way that they strengthened our democracy is our current history as well.

So we honor Elizabeth Peratrovich's legacy of standing up for what is right. She is an inspiration because she set the example that when you see something wrong, you speak out and you do something about it.

And she also provided a great example for why we need to listen—why we need to listen to all perspectives and voices, especially those who have been left out or left behind, oftentimes intentionally.

I think of Stella Martin of Kake, AK, a champion of equal rights herself. She described Elizabeth Peratrovich as "a fighter with velvet gloves." And she was truly a fighter. Elizabeth Peratrovich Day is also a timely reminder for those of us here in the U.S. Senate. We all have an obligation to respond to the calls from our constituents who are seeking protection, including through electoral reforms and improvements for voter access.

We all know that we went through a very partisan exercise on voting rights legislation here on the floor earlier this year. Some may say it is hard to see how that advanced the debate on this issue; but it didn't change the underlying fact that we do need to come together to advance good solid policy in this area. I am working with a group of Senators. There are around 16 of us, I think, total. But we are continuing to focus on these issues of election re-

form. We want to try to determine a bipartisan path forward so that we can actually move important safeguards and clarifications into the law. And it may not be easy to take on some of these complicated issues, particularly when you get the pulls from both sides to not engage to try to come to the middle. But like we did with the infrastructure bill, like we are doing with the Violence Against Women Act, we need to follow a path that allows us to get some things done as opposed to simply sending messages.

As Alaska celebrates Elizabeth Peratrovich, I hope the Senate will look to her legacy for inspiration as we seek unity and follow her example of treating our fellow citizens with respect. We have got too much at stake to operate in any other lesser manner.

I thank the Presiding Officer for his attention.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session to be in a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ANNIVERSARY OF PROTESTS IN BAHRAIN

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, it has been 11 years since the people of Bahrain gathered in the streets of Manama to urge their leaders to grant them stronger economic, social, and human rights. Bahrainis of all backgrounds called upon their leaders for meaningful change, for a voice at the table in the matters that affected their everyday lives. But their activism was met with brutal repression from the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Journalists and human rights activists have shared with the world how Bahrain's national security forces violently beat unarmed protestors in the crowds, severely injuring and even killing protestors with tear gas, rubber bullets, and other live ammunition. The forces arbitrarily arrested and detained journalists, pursued volunteers who were helping the injured, and spared no one, not even children. This anniversary is stained by the blood of the Bahraini people, and it pains me that despite over a decade of asking for